

VZCZCXRO5403
OO RUEHCHI RUEHDT RUEHHM RUEHNH RUEHTRO
DE RUEHGO #0318/01 1261313
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 051313Z MAY 08 ZDS
FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7482
INFO RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA IMMEDIATE 1117
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE 4664
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL IMMEDIATE 8205
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO IMMEDIATE 5767
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 1519
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA IMMEDIATE 3635
RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 RANGOON 000318

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (PARA NUMBERING)

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EAP/MLS; INR/EAP; S/ES-O/CMS; CA/OCS/ACS;
DS/IP/EAP; DS/ITA; DSCC

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [ASEC](#) [CASC](#) [AMGT](#) [PREL](#) [AEMR](#) [BM](#)
SUBJECT: EMBASSY CONVENES EAC MEETING

REF: A. RANGOON 310
[1](#)B. 315

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SUMMARY

[1](#)1. (SBU) Disregard Rangoon 317 sent in error.

[1](#)2. (SBU) On May 5, Embassy Rangoon convened an EAC meeting to discuss the situation following Cyclone Nargis which struck Burma the evening of May 2 and morning of May 3. The DCM chaired the meeting. The EAC reviewed the tripwires in Post's Emergency Action Plan for a natural disaster and agreed that the situation warranted a request for authorized departure. Further to that determination, we have taken several other actions to reduce our presence. Post requests the Department establish a Task Force to assist Embassy Rangoon, see Action Request in para 4.

EAC ASSESSMENT

[1](#)3. (SBU) After reviewing the tripwires in Post's Emergency Action Plan (EAP), all members of the EAC agreed that conditions in Rangoon warranted a request that the Department approve authorized departure. Specifically, the EAC agreed that the Government of Burma (GOB) was unable to provide basic services at this time in Rangoon, that major damage to infrastructure made movement difficult within the hurricane-affected parts of the country, and that basic services to the public in these areas such as water, electricity, and fuel, were limited or non-existent. Additionally, Management reported Post had not yet received all of the fuel shipments it had ordered and was at risk of running low of diesel and high octane fuel for Embassy operations, generators and vehicles. RSO and others expressed concern about the ability of government authorities to maintain law and order if shortages and outages become prolonged. DAO stated the military lacked the training or resources to respond effectively to the crisis, and reported

seeing isolated incidences of looting in Rangoon. All members of the EAC reported that government-provided electricity and water were non-existent throughout most of the city, and several Embassy homes lacked sufficient power or water. The RSO suggested that several tripwires for an ordered departure also exist. The EAC concurred that some of these conditions were present, but based on the overall situation, determined a request for ordered departure was not warranted at this time. The EAC agreed it would continue to review the situation on the ground.

POST ACTIONS

14. (SBU) Based on our assessment of the conditions and Post's EAP, we have taken the following actions:

- We have proposed a travel alert to CA recommending Amcits defer all non-essential travel to Burma and urge those already in Burma depart at the earliest opportunity;
- We will hold a town hall meeting for all AMCITS (official and non-official) the morning of May 6;
- Post will close Service CAC in order to conserve fuel and manpower per RSO request;
- We will close the American Center temporarily until manpower and fuel gaps are addressed;
- Post will continue to operate daily from 0800 through 1630 under a liberal leave policy;
- All Embassy sections will reduce classified holdings to one hour destruction time;
- RSO and Management will request the GOB provide security and logistical support, including the resumption of police presence outside Embassy facilities and a commitment to provide the fuel we have ordered;

15. (SBU) Action Request: That Department establish a Task

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Force to assist Embassy Rangoon. The most important hours for us are during our daytime (Washington night - ten and a half hours behind Rangoon).
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